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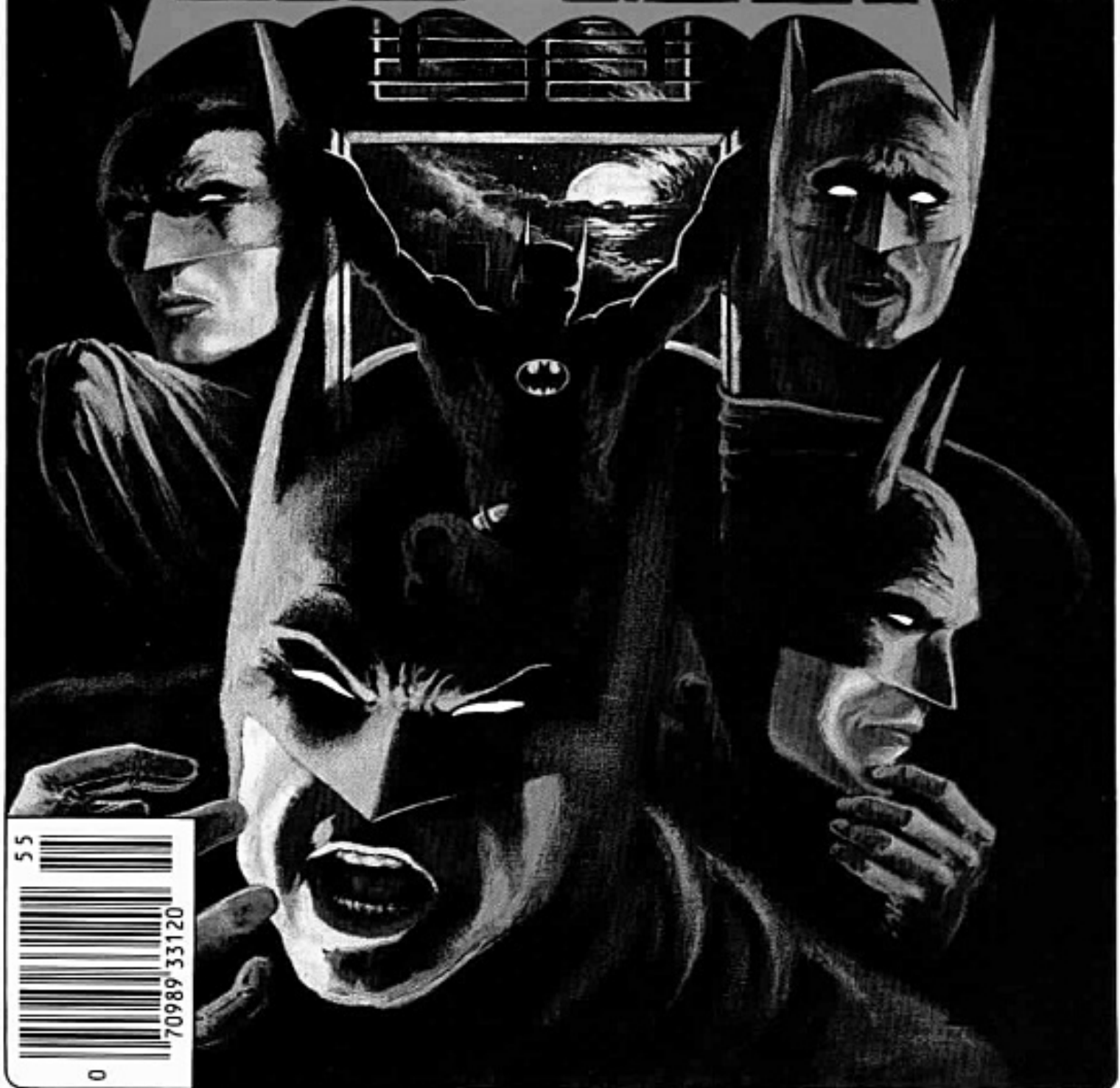
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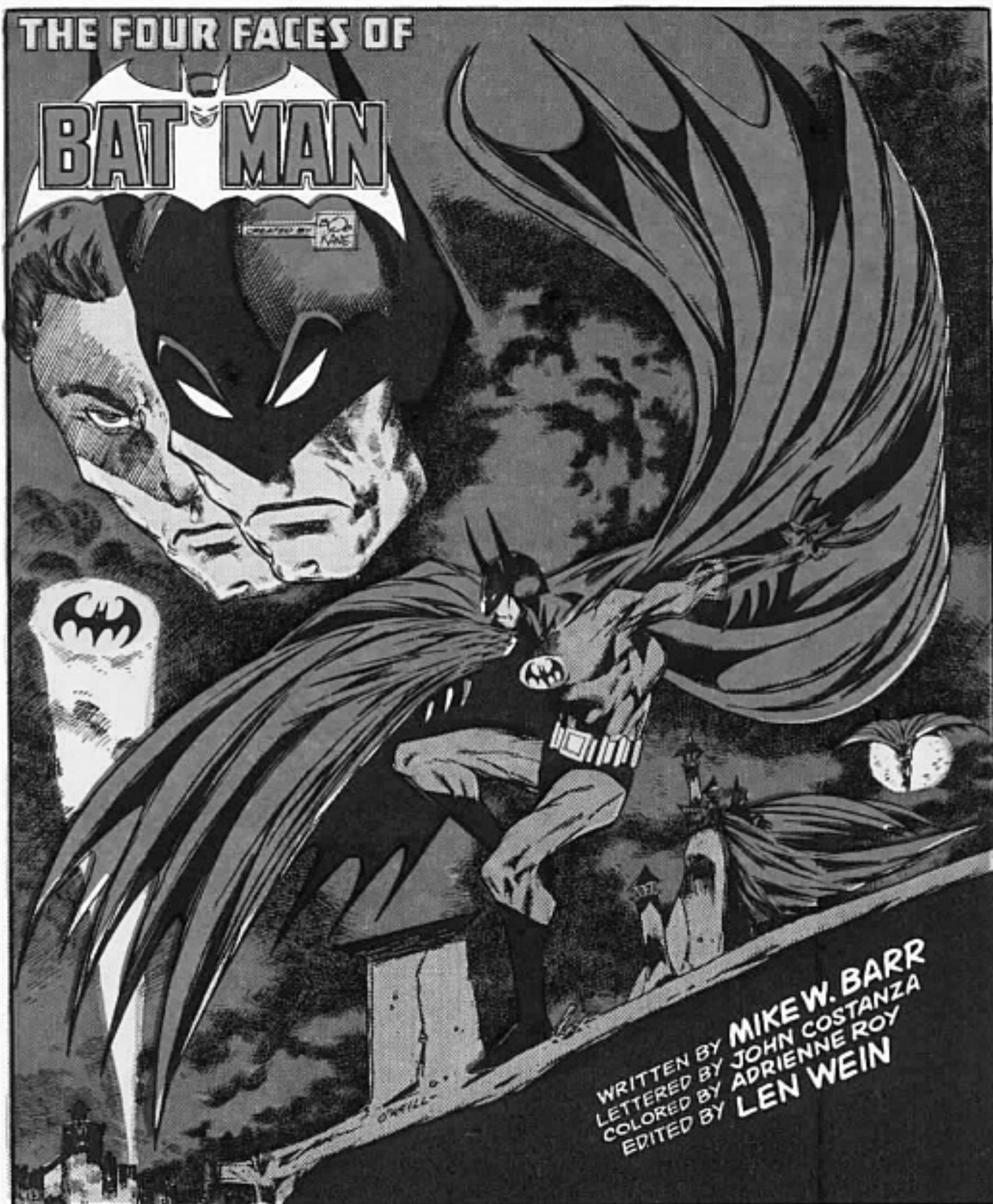
APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BAT MAN



THE FOUR FACES OF

BATMAN



WRITTEN BY MIKE W. BARR
LETTERED BY JOHN COSTANZA
COLORED BY ADRIENNE ROY
EDITED BY LEN WEIN

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BAT MAN

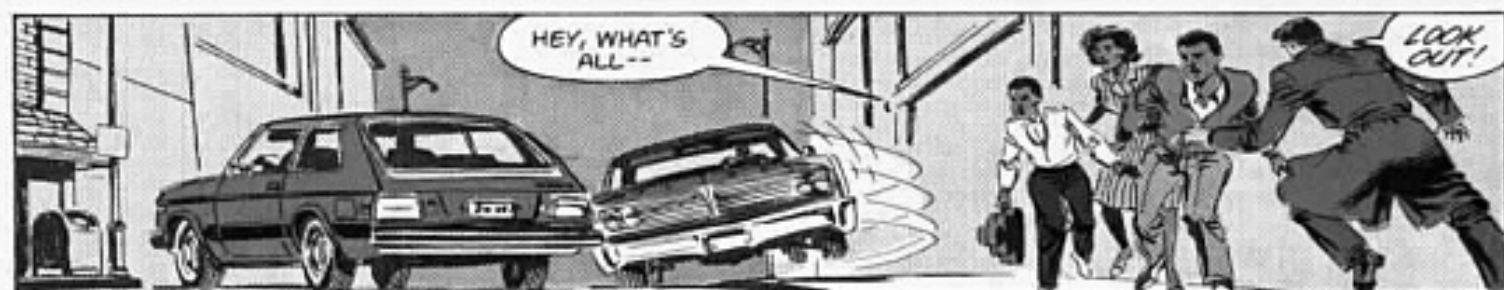
FIRST FACE: THE CHILD "CHILDHOOD'S END"

ILLUSTRATED BY
JERRY
ORDWAY













AND AS THE MOIST CLAY
DRIED, CRUMBLED, BRUCE
WAYNE GREW UP...

...GREW
OLD...

...ALONE...

...ALWAYS, ALWAYS...

...ALONE.

HAVEN'T THOUGHT
ABOUT MY CHILDHOOD
FOR YEARS...

7
[CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING]









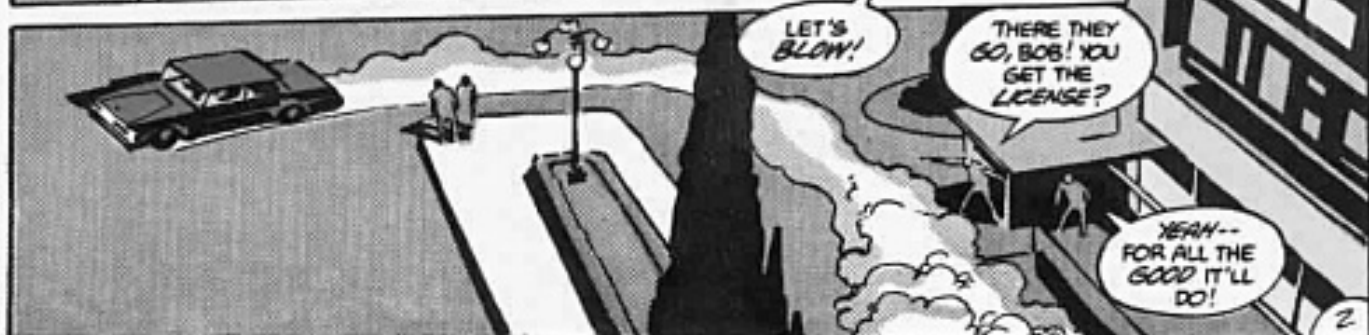
YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE!... THIS IS THE BLACK HEART LIBERATION ARMY SPEAKING!

WE DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU-- ALL WE WANT IS TO SERVE OUR CAUSE...

...BUT IF WE HAVE TO DIE FOR IT-- SO WILL YOU!



SECOND FACE:
THE
AVENGER







GORDON'S MESSAGE
SAID THIS CONCERNS
THE **BLACK**
HEART...

... MAYBE THIS TIME
I CAN GET A LEAD
ON THEM--- STOP THEIR
"HEART ATTACKS" AND
INDUCE ONE OF MY
OWN!

NO TRANSMITTERS
NEAR BLASTING
AREA

GOOD
EVENING,
CAPTAIN.

NOT FOR LEVA
CARLOSLE, BATMAN...

... SHE
WAS A 40-
YEAR VETERAN
OF GOTHAM SAVING...
DUE FOR RETIREMENT
NEXT SPRING.

THE **BLACK HEART** HAPPENED;
BATMAN-- SHE WAS SO FRIGHTENED
BY THEIR EXPLOSIVES THAT SHE
SUFFERED A STROKE...

...HER LAST!
THAT MAKES
IT MURDER!

YES,
SIR... BUT
THE **BLACK**
HEART **ARMY**
ISN'T THE
KILLER!

WHAT?

WHAT
HAPPENED,
SIR?

THE **BLACK HEART** ARE
PROFESSIONALS, CAPTAIN--
THEIR USE OF LIVE EXPLOSIVES IS
THEIR **TRADEMARK**...

NO TRANSMITTERS
NEAR BLASTING
AREA

... BUT THEY WOULDN'T LOSE
LIVE EXPLOSIVES SO CLOSE TO A
DEVELOPMENT SITE! THEIR SIGNALS
MIGHT GET MIXED-- FAIL TO
FUNCTION!

BUT THEN,
WHO--?



THAT'S OUR
NEXT STEP, SIR,
AND I CAN WALK
IT FASTER
ALONE!

;; SIGH ;;



WHOEVER'S BEHIND
THIS HAS SHED
INNOCENT BLOOD...

...FOR THE LAST
TIME.



DID YOU
DITCH THE
CAR?

IN GOTHAM BAY!
WILL YOU QUIT
WORRYIN'...?



I KNOW,
BUT--

I TELL YOU, WE'RE
HOME FREE! THE COPS'LL
BE LOOKING FOR THE
BLACK HEART...

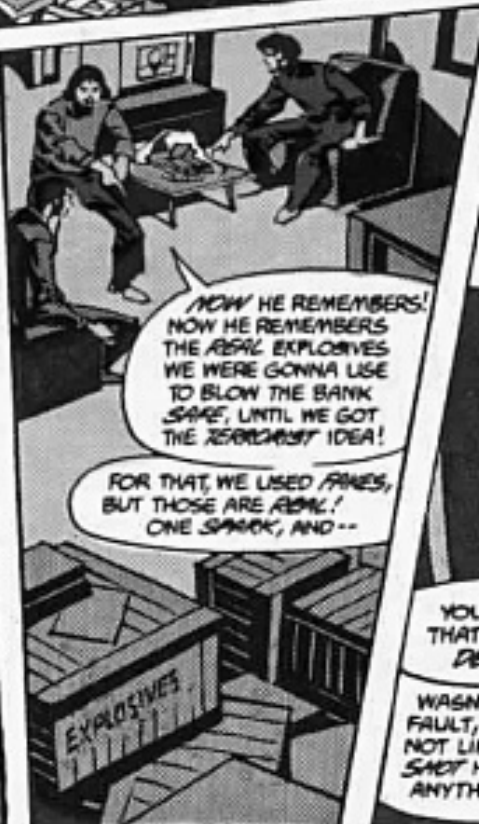
...AND WE'VE
GOT A QUARTER
MILLION-- TAX
FREE!



WHAT DO
YOU THINK YOU'RE
DOING?

LIGHTIN' A
SMOKE, THAT'S
ALL! WHAT'S
YOUR--

--PROBLEM?
;; ULP ;;



NOW HE REMEMBERS!
NOW HE REMEMBERS
THE REAL EXPLOSIVES
WE WERE GONNA USE
TO BLOW THE BANK
SAFE, UNTIL WE GOT
THE REBORN IDEA!

FOR THAT, WE USED FINES,
BUT THOSE ARE REAL!
ONE SPARK, AND--



HEY,
LISTEN
UP!

LENA CARLISLE,
63, SUFFERED A
FATAL STROKE
DURING THE ROBBERY
OF GOTHAM
SAVINGS...

YOU HEAR
THAT? SHE'S
DEAD!

WASN'T YOUR
FAULT, MAN! IT'S
NOT LIKE YOU
SAID HER, OR
ANYTHING!





FROM THE HALLS
OF MON-TE-ZUUD-NIA,
TO THE SHORES OF
TRI-PO-LEEE...

WE WILL FIGHT
OUR COUNTRY'S
BAGGAT-LES ON!

YOU CAN SKIP THE
RECRUITING SPEECH,
"GENERAL"—WE ALL
KNOW WHY YOU WERE
DISCHARGED
DISHONORABLY!

IT'S A
LIE! I WAS
NOWHERE NEAR
THAT VIETNAMESE
VILLAGE!

SHUT
UP, GENERAL! RECENTLY,
YOU SOLD SOME AMATEURS SOME
KRE7 DETONATORS—SAME TYPE
WE USE!

WHO
ARE THEY?



I CAN'T TELL
YOU THAT! I DON'T
EVEN KNOW!

LYIN' TO YOUR
SUPERIORS?
NOT SMART,
GENERAL...



...YOU COULD
LOSE A HAND THAT
WAY... ONE FINGER
AT A TIME!

I'LL TELL!
I'LL TELL!

GOOD
STRATEGY...
GENERAL.

BIGGEST ILLEGAL
ARMS DEALER IN
GOTHAM IS THE
GENERAL... BUT
WE "AGREED" HE
WAS RETIRING!

IF HE LIED
TO ME, I'LL--





B-BATMAN...?

GENERAL!
WHO DID THIS
TO YOU?

L-LIED TO YOU
WHEN I SAID I WAS
THROUGH... BUT :HEH:
I'M THROUGH NOW!



WHO DID
THIS,
GENERAL?

TH-THE
BLACK HEART!
L-LOOKING
FOR THE BANK
ROBBERS...
I KNOW
WHERE THEY
WENT...

TELL
ME.



413 ALLENFORD
DRIVE... D-DIDN'T THINK THEY'D
KILL ME... ALWAYS THOUGHT
THERE WAS HONOR AMONGS...



...AMONG...
TH-THIEVES...



YOU WERE
HARDY,
GENERAL.

REST IN
PEACE.





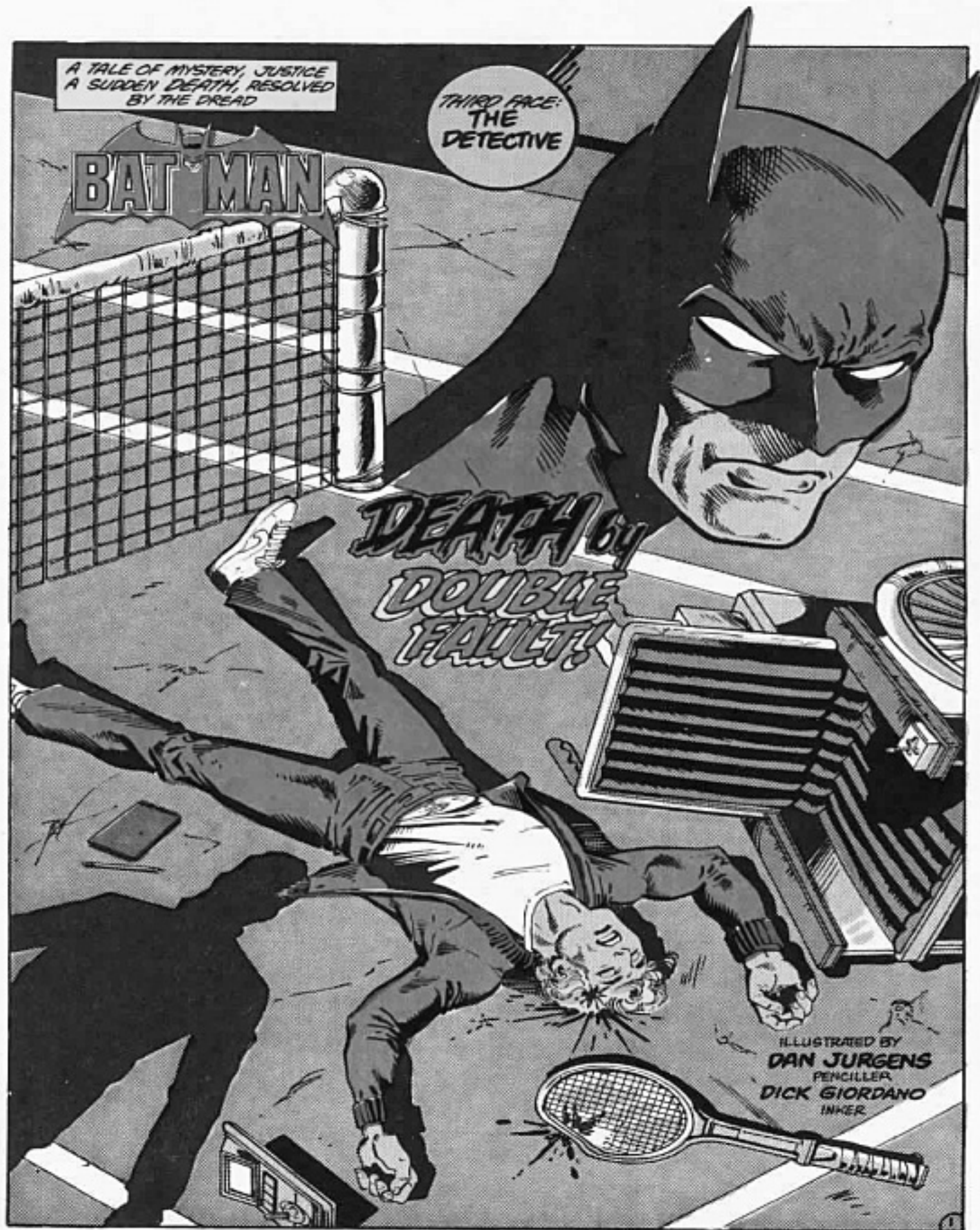
A TALE OF MYSTERY, JUSTICE
A SUDDEN DEATH, RESOLVED
BY THE DREAD

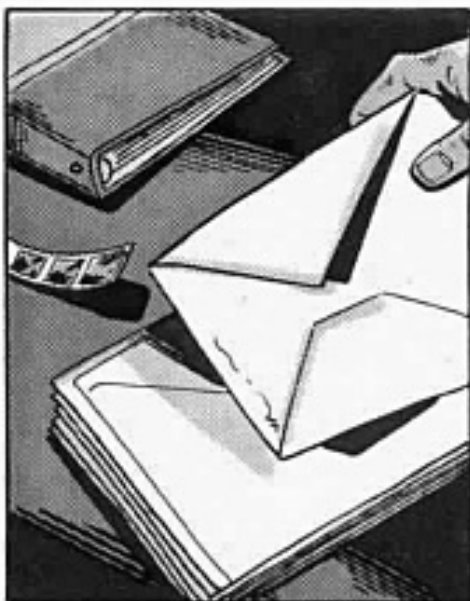
THIRD FACE:
THE
DETECTIVE

BAT-MAN

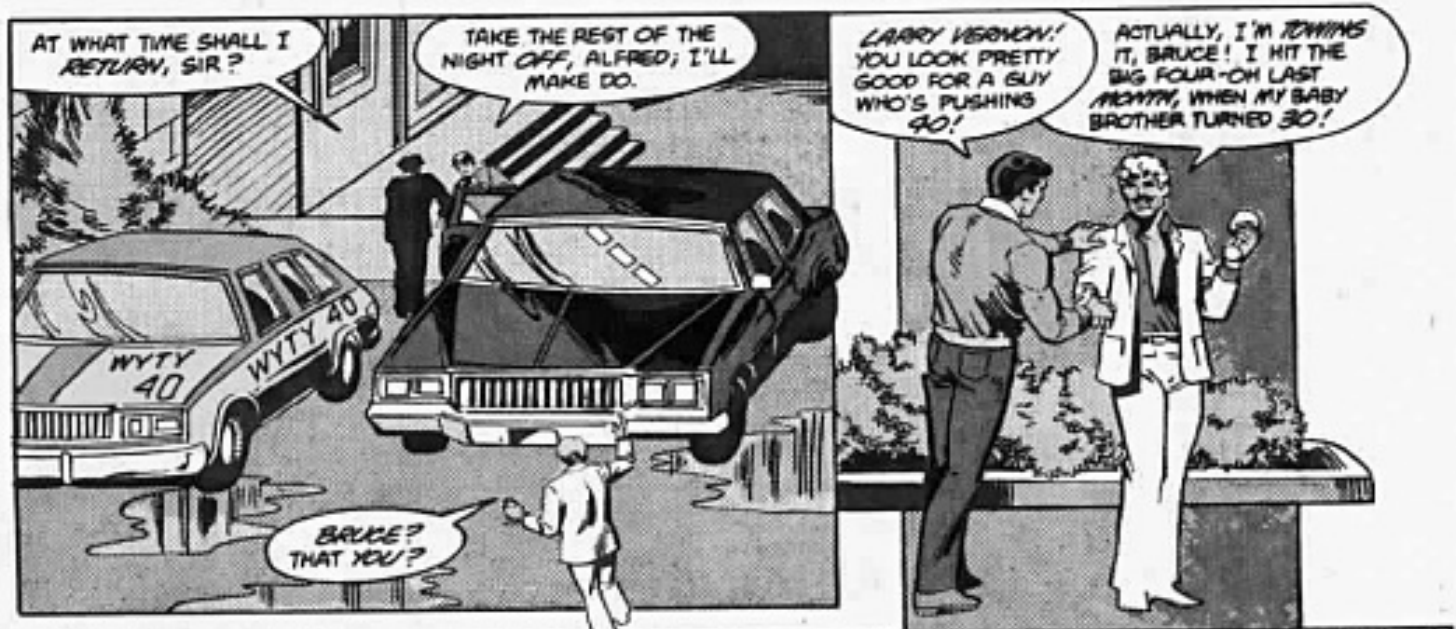
DEATH BY
DOUBLE
FAULT!

ILLUSTRATED BY
DAN JURGENS
PENCILLER
DICK GIORDANO
INKER









ABOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, LARRY! CAN'T YOU EVER KEEP AN APPOINTMENT?

ONLY ON A LERSH, DAD!

WRRRRRRRR

THE MECHANICAL MUM FROM OUTSIDE, I WONDER-- GOOD LORD!

SO GLAD YOU COULD ALL MAKE IT TONIGHT...

ESPECIALLY YOU, BRUCE, AND JANE-- IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME!

TEN YEARS... BUT PHIL LOOKS AS IF HE'S AGED TWENTY!

OH!

YOU SEEM STARTLED, BRUCE! HAVE I CHANGED THAT MUCH?

"IT'S ONLY BEEN A DECADE, AFTER ALL, SINCE WE LAST GATHERED HERE-- JUST AFTER I BUILT THIS HOUSE, ON THE WINNIPISS FROM MY FIRST MAJOR TENNIS TOURNAMENT! I WALKED IN HERE ON MY OWN..."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

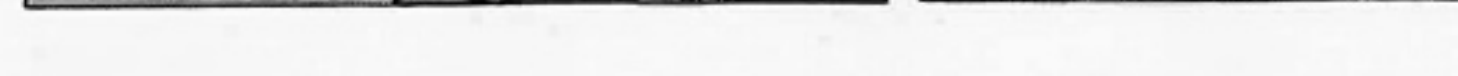
"...THE LAST TIME I EVER WALKED ANYWHERE! I WAS PUSHED DOWN THE STAIRS THAT NIGHT..."

... BY ONE OF YOU! AND I KNOW WHICH ONE!

STOP TALKING NONSENSE, SON!

NO ONE PUSHED YOU, PHIL! YOU SLIPPED!

SO DID YOU, JANE...







... BUT I'M AFRAID NONE OF YOU ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE ROOM!



APPROACHING SURPRISE.

... AND THEN WAYNE CALLED ME, COMMISSIONER. HE HAD TO LEAVE, HIS CONSTITUTION, YOU KNOW.

I KNOW. AND YOU'VE ESTABLISHED THAT THE SERVANTS ALL ALIBI EACH OTHER...



... BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS SECURITY GUARD? COULD HE HAVE --

-- MURDERED VERNON AND FAKE THE ATTACK ON HIMSELF? NO MOTIVE, COMMISSIONER. PLUS, THE ANGLE AND SEVERITY OF HIS WOUND RULE OUT SELF-INFLICTION.

I SEE. WHO HAD ACCESS TO THE MURDER WEAPON?

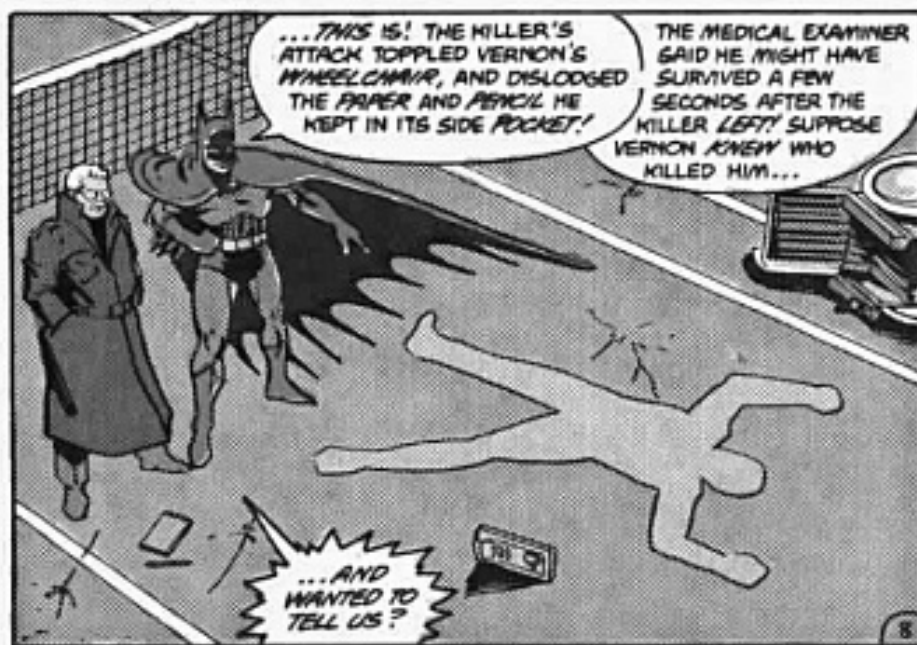


EVERYONE, COMMISSIONER. THE RACKET WAS ONE OF THE "PHIL VERNON SIGNATURE LINE," MANUFACTURED TEN YEARS AGO.

STRANGE THING TO DISPLAY. MUST HAVE REMINDED HIM OF HIS AFFLICTION EVERY TIME HE LOOKED AT THEM!



BUT THAT'S NOT THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT THIS CASE, COMMISSIONER...



... THIS IS! THE KILLER'S ATTACK TOPPLED VERNON'S WHEELCHAIR, AND DISLODGED THE PRINTER AND PENCIL HE KEPT IN ITS SIDE POCKET!

THE MEDICAL EXAMINER SAID HE MIGHT HAVE SURVIVED A FEW SECONDS AFTER THE KILLER LEFT! SUPPOSE VERNON KNEW WHO KILLED HIM...

... AND WANTED TO TELL US?



HE COULDN'T USE
THE PAPER AND
PENCIL... THEY
WERE BEYOND
HIS ABILITY...
WHAT ELSE
IS THERE,
BATMAN?



THIS, COMMISSIONER! TRACES
OF BLOOD ON THIS VIDEO GAME
INDICATE HE TOUCHED IT AFTER
HE WAS ATTACKED...

... AND FOR WHAT OTHER
REASON THAN TO LEAVE A
DYING MESSAGE TO
IDENTIFY HIS KILLER?

ALL THE SUSPECTS
HAVE A 40 "CONNECTION,"
COMMISSIONER...

MMMMMM...
40...

LARRY VERNON!
YOU SAID HE'S 40
YEARS OLD!



JANE CLAREBORN
WORKS FOR
CHANNEL 40...

... AND PHILIP VERNON,
SENIOR, RECEIVES
HIS MAIL AT GOTHAM
GENERAL DELIVERY...
POST OFFICE BOX
40!

THEN THE 40
CLUE APPLIES TO
ALL OF THEM!
THEY ALL
KILLED HIM!



THEN VERNON WOULD
HAVE CHOSEN THE
SCORE "40-40."
SIR-- "FORTY ALL,"
NOT "40-0"-- A
LOVE GAME! EACH
SUSPECT HAS A
40 CONNECTION...

... BUT ONLY ONE
HAS A 40-0
CONNECTION--
AND THAT'S THE
KILLER!

YOU'VE SEEN EVERY-
THING THE CAGED
CRIMINOLOGIST HAS
SEEN, READER! HE
KNOWS WHO KILLED
PHILIP VERNON...

?

DO
YOU?



GAME POINT SCORED

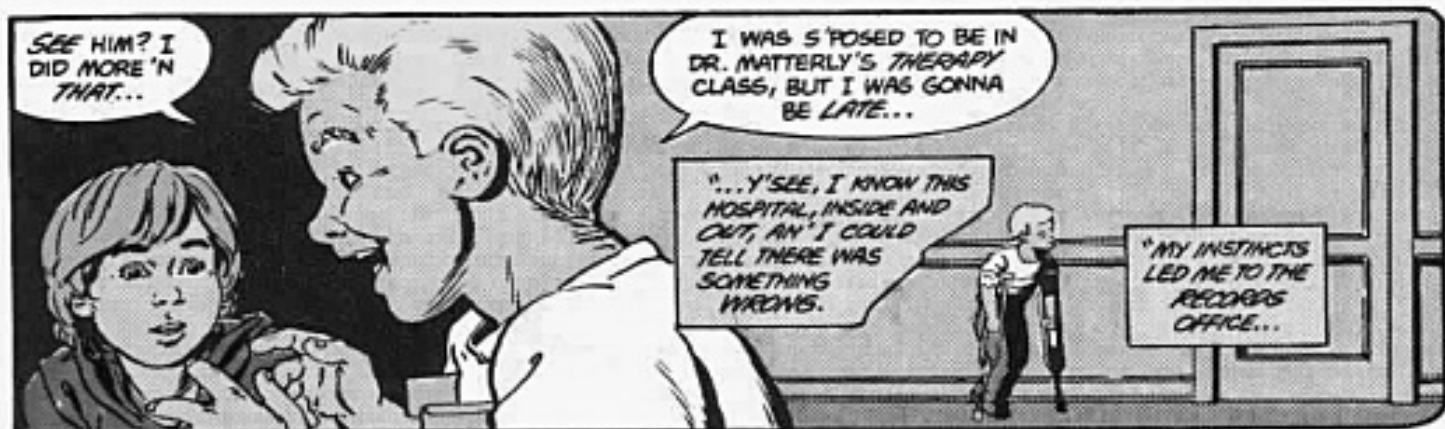
FOURTH FACE: THE MAN "PERSPECTIVES!"

ILLUSTRATED BY
PAUL SMITH









"BATS HIT 'IM WITH A FIST THE SIZE 'A MOUNT RUSHMORE..."



"... AN' WHEN THE FIREBUG PULLED A GUN-- WELL, HE SHOULD 'A KNOWN BETTER! BATS LET THE BULLETS PASS THROUGH 'IM..."

"... AN' THEN HE DID HIS OWN BIT FOR GUN CONTROL!"



WHICH WAY OUT, PAL?

CAN'T LEAVE YET, BATMAN! DR. MATTERLY'S CLASS MAY NEED OUR HELP!

LEAD ON, RALPHIE!

"THEN BATS SAVED DR. M. FROM BEIN' BARBECUED! I LET 'IM HANDLE THAT BY HIMSELF..."





"... I WAS ALREADY WORKIN' OUT A WAY T' GET US OUTTA THERE!"

WHEEE! I'M HAVIN' THE TIME OF MY LIFE! SOME FUN, HUH, KIDS?

WE'RE ONLY ON THE FORTIETH FLOOR, BATMAN! I'LL CLIMB DOWN!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD STAY WITH ME, TO BE AN EXAMPLE FOR THE OTHERS!

YEAH, THEY'LL NEED IT!

"... AN' WHEN WE TOUCHED DOWN..."

RALPHIE, MY HERO! YOU WERE SO BRAVE..!

I KNOW, DOC! THANKS FOR THE HAND, BATMAN!

"THEY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING, BUT AT LEAST THEY DIDN'T CRY..."

ANYTIME, PAL-- NOT THAT YOU NEEDED IT!

WOW! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU AND THE BATMAN WERE THAT TIGHT, RALPHIE!

SURE! HE ASKED ME T' BE HIS NEW ROOMY IN A COUPLE YEARS...

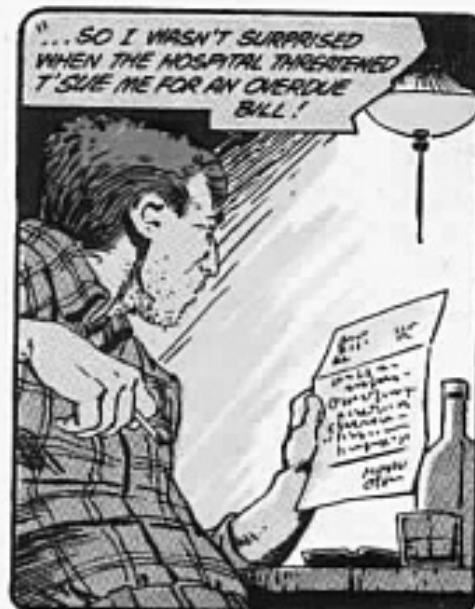
...I TOLD HIM I'D THINK ABOUT IT!

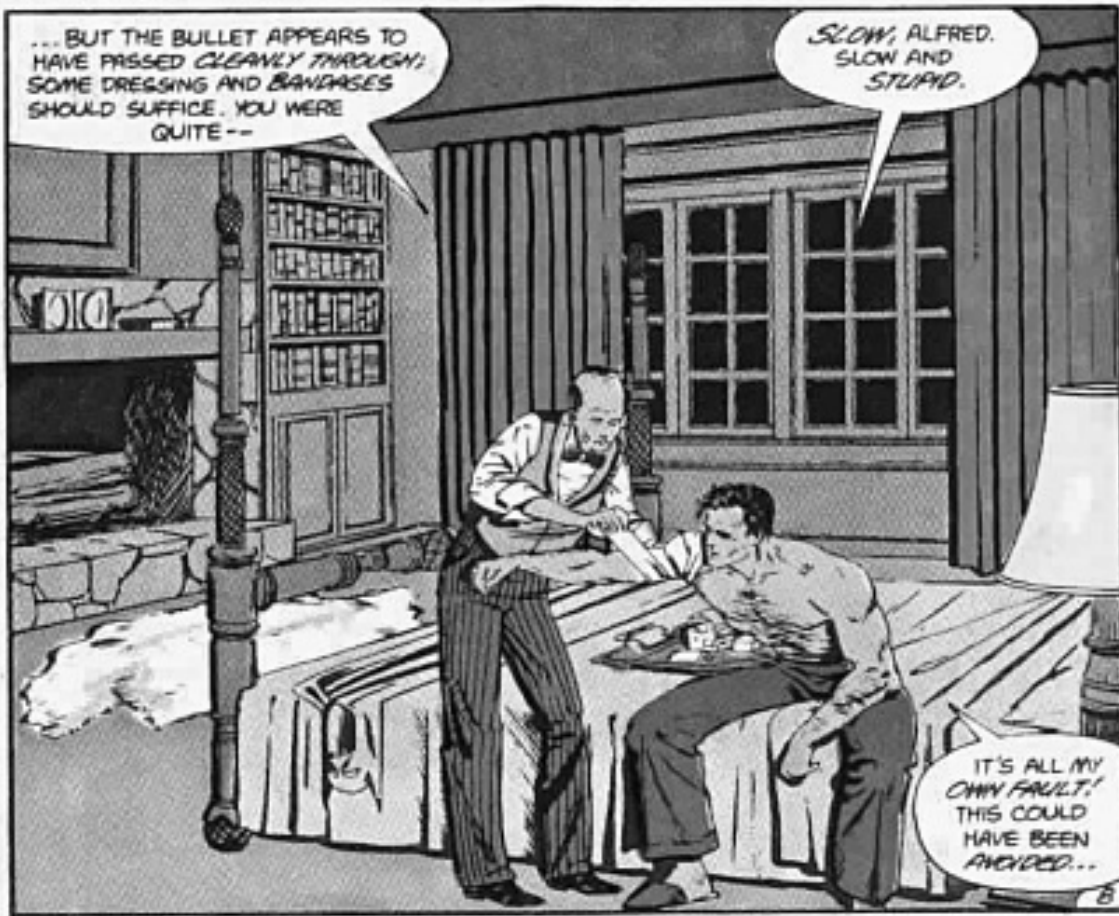
MR. BRIGGS? I'VE BEEN ASSIGNED YOUR CASE BY THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE, AND --

--AND YOU WANNA PLEAD MY CASE, RIGHT?

DON'T KID ME, MAC, I'M IN THE SOUP FOR REAL! FIGURES, THOUGH...

...MY WHOLE LIFE'S BEEN ONE LONG STREAK OF BAD LUCK...





"... BUT I LET MY EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF ME. WHEN I HEARD THE ALARM SOUND..."



"... ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS MAKING SURE EVERYONE GOT OUT SAFELY."



"SO WHEN I SAW A SHADOW ON A PEBBLED GLASS DOOR, I ASSUMED IT WAS A HOSPITAL WORKER, OR A PATIENT."



"THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR THAT SORT OF CARELESSNESS; I'D BEEN UP ONLY THIRTY-SIX HOURS."

WHO...?

YOU'VE BEEN WARNED. NOW YOU'LL MAKE YOUR MOVE.



"HE DIDN'T SEE THE CEILING ABOVE HIM ABOUT TO COLLAPSE. FOR A MOMENT, I WAS TEMPTED TO SAVE THE STATE SOME MONEY..."



"... BUT I WASN'T ABOUT TO MAKE IT THAT EASY FOR HIM. I WANTED HIM TO GET A FAIR TRIAL, BEFORE HE WAS SHIPPED OFF TO PRISON."

"OF COURSE, HE HAD A GUN, BUT THAT WAS NO OBSTACLE. I ALMOST HAD HIM DOWN..."



"...THEN I GOT CARELESS"

GET OUT OF HERE, SON, BEFORE--



"I MOVED, TOOK THE SLUG IN THE SHOULDER INSTEAD OF THE HEART..."



"...THEN I GOT DOWN TO CASES."



GUEST



MEANWHILE...

The year 1984 saw many anniversaries observed in the comics world. Most of these were proclaimed from splashes of color or gold bands on covers. But, at least in my neighborhood, one set of anniversaries, milestones in the world of comics, seem to have passed unnoticed.



It was the thirtieth anniversary of Dr. Frederic Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent* and the formulation of the Comic Book Code.

For those who may have missed the book, *Seduction of the Innocent*, or SOTI, as it is known to fans, was the work of a psychologist, apparently a decent sort of fellow, who held two major ideals:

- a. violence is bad
- b. enhanced communication will diminish violence

During the great "juvenile delinquent" phase of American culture in the fifties, when people were searching for explanations of what was seen as a mass uprising by American teenagers, Dr. Wertham came to the conclusion that television and comic books, especially comic books, all comic books, were the cause of the evil. They violated both his ideals by glorifying violence and telling stories in picture form, rendering young minds incapable of comprehending or communicating complex or abstract ideas.

To read SOTI today is to read a textbook in dysphemism and muckraking. Dr. Wertham seems to have decided that comic books were evil and then gathered the facts to prove it. The book relies heavily on Finagle's Ninth Precept: "If you tell people something, nine out of ten will believe it without asking questions. And if you add that your facts are the result of a scientific survey, the percentage goes up." The fact that Dr. Wertham believed everything he wrote gives the writing more fervor. SOTI and the doctor's later works are still quoted and cited by the protectors of youth. (Dr. Wertham, in the seventies, also wrote a book on fan magazines. He approved of them, because they represented a means of communication.)



The U.S. Congress investigated comic books in 1954, among other things. (There was also an investigation of paperback book covers under way.) Hoping to avoid any further federal heat, comic book publishers decided to set up a batch of rules for internal regulation. One might assume Dr. Wertham would have been pleased, but one would be assuming incorrectly. Dr. Wertham gave his opinion of previous codes in SOTI: they were attempts by the publishers to cover up their own misdeeds. Dr. Wertham condemned not just the primarily violent titles, the

horror and crime titles, but all comic books, from BUGS BUNNY to TALES FROM THE CRYPT and back again.



No one can be found, in fact, to say a good word for the Code. Or can there? Actually, the Code did its work well, and did it twice. First, it forced comic book writers and artists to throw away the old clichés and old hackneyed plots, now forbidden under the Code, and come up with new ones. (Whether the result was more artistic or more readable can be debated. The era produced its peaks and its Death Valleys, but so did the pre-Code era.) Then, after the passage of a suitable number of years, it allowed for a "rebirth" of comics, as new writers "dared the Code," throwing away the new clichés and new hackneyed plots and returning to the old ones.



Dr. Wertham has gone the way of EC Comics, and the Comic Book Code hasn't been at all well, lately. But the comic book industry continues, as do the people who would like to see it restrained by law. Different muckrakers with different codes will come along, and the comic book industry may fight or it may hide behind more internal regulations, and if anyone looks back at the events of 1954 at all, it will probably be to shrug and say, "Well, that was just another phase we went through."

Which is what commemorating anniversaries is all about.

Don Crawford
940 N. Franklin St.
Manchester, Iowa 52057



DC
ON SALE THE
CHECK
WEEK OF APRIL 11
LIST

☐ Red Tornado 1: A four-issue mini-series where the android gets his act together!

- ☐ Batman 385: Batman and Robin face dangers on the streets of Gotham!
- ☐ The Flash 347: The trial concludes with the final summations!
- ☐ Superman 409: Superman becomes "The Sleepwalker from Krypton."
- ☐ Star Trek 16: Kirk and company return from the Mirror Universe only to confront—the Federation!
- ☐ Amethyst 7: The secret of Lord Garnet is revealed!
- ☐ Jemm, Son of Saturn 11: The destruction of Claudius Tull!

- ☐ Arak, Son of Thunder 46: The Son of Thunder meets the Norse god of Thunder!
- ☐ Omega Men 28: Ryand'r meets the creatures of the synoptic net!
- ☐ Legion of Super-Heroes 12: Amidst interstellar battle, three Legionnaires quit!
- ☐ Batman Annual 9: The four faces of Batman presented by Barr, O'Neill, Jurgens, Giordano, Ordway, Nino, and P. Smith!